

VZCZCXRO4870
PP RUEHAG RUEHDF RUEHLZ
DE RUEHMZ #0347/01 1621722
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
P 111722Z JUN 06
FM AMCONSUL MUNICH
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3277
INFO RUCNFRG/FRG COLLECTIVE
RUEHBM/AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST 1675

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 MUNICH 000347

SIPDIS

SENSITIVE
SIPDIS

DEPT FOR G/TIP, INL/HSTC, DRL/IL, PRM, G/IWI, EUR/PGI, AND
EUR/AGS

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: KCRM PHUM KWMN KJUS PGOV SMIG ELAB GM RO
SUBJECT: BAVARIAN TIP UPDATE: ARRESTS AND CONVICTIONS;
WORLD CUP

REF: A. BERLIN 1504

¶B. MUNICH 113

SUMMARY

¶11. (U) Bavarian police arrested two Romanians and one German May 21 for trafficking in persons (TIP) and pimping in Bavaria and Baden-Wuerttemberg. The arrests were the result of a four-month police investigation launched on the basis of evidence gathered during routine "controls" of brothels in January 2006. A special police task force, "AG STAR," was established to investigate the case. In a separate case, a Munich court on June 1 sentenced three other Romanians for TIP, pimping, and blackmailing. In a June 7 press conference, Bavarian Interior Minister Beckstein stated Bavaria was well prepared to counter TIP during the World Cup and expected fewer incidents of trafficking cases than media reports originally anticipated or predicted. End Summary.

THE ROMANIAN CONNECTION

¶12. (U) According to police sources, Bavarian police arrested two Romanian men for trafficking Romanian women, mainly from the city of Sibiu, to Germany, where they were allegedly forced into prostitution. Police say the women were provided forged Spanish and Italian passports. The suspects took the women's earnings, and physically threatened them if they showed any resistance. Police also arrested a third suspect, a German male, who allegedly acted as a middleman, transferring women to other red light districts in Germany.

¶13. (SBU) The head of the TIP Division of the Munich police headquarters, Peter Schillinger, told the Consulate that authorities first became suspicious when police "controlled" (under Bavarian law, police can conduct routine inspections of brothels without cause) a new brothel on the east side of Munich on its opening night, finding a woman with what seemed to be a forged Spanish passport. Police ultimately determined the woman was a Romanian citizen. Although she was willing to cooperate with authorities by giving further information about the traffickers, she told police she did not want to be included in the witness protection program, preferring to be returned to Romania instead.

¶14. (U) Following further investigation, police decided to

conduct targeted controls at select brothels in Munich, Augsburg, and Ulm (on the border between Bavaria and Baden-Wuerttemberg). The additional controls turned up two more trafficked Romanian women who were allegedly forced to work as prostitutes. Evidence obtained in the controls led police to the three suspects.

ARRESTS IN BAVARIA AND BADEN-WUERTTEMBERG

¶ 15. (U) In a coordinated action May 18, police, armed with search and arrest warrants, arrested all three suspects on charges of TIP, pimping and blackmailing. The three men were arrested separately in Weissenhorn, Bavaria; Laupheim, Baden-Wuerttemberg; and Achstetten, Baden-Wuerttemberg. Further investigation led Munich police to two more Romanian prostitutes in Ulm, who had also been in contact with the suspects. Police determined that at least the younger of the two women appeared to also be a victim of the trafficking. [NOTE: Although most of the arrests were made in Baden-Wuerttemberg, the investigation and arrests were conducted under the leadership of the Bavarian police, with the cooperation of Baden-Wuerttemberg authorities.
END NOTE.]

¶ 16. (SBU) During the arrests, police seized several mobile phones and other evidence. Authorities have set-up a special task force called "AG STAR" to further investigate the recent TIP arrests, and expect the task force to be active for at least several more weeks. Schillinger told the Consulate that prosecutors hope to expedite the case through the legal system with the goal of going to court by September or October of this year.

MUNICH 00000347 002 OF 002

OTHER ROMANIANS CONVICTED OF TIP

¶ 17. (U) In a separate case, a Munich court on June 1 sentenced three other Romanian men for TIP, pimping, and blackmailing eight Romanian women they had lured to Germany for prostitution. Most of the women were under 21 years of age. The three traffickers had promised the women well-paid jobs in Germany, then took their passports and housed them in apartments they had rented. The traffickers received sentences ranging from one-and-a-half years, to five years, nine months in prison.

BAVARIAN POLICE GIVEN BROAD LATITUDE

¶ 18. (SBU) Schillinger stressed the Bavarian Interior Ministry generally gives police greater latitude than their counterparts are given in other German states. He said police in other jurisdictions particularly envy the ability of Bavarian police to "control" brothels without any legal justification. [NOTE: Federal Interior and Family Ministry officials report German police in other states routinely use other legal grounds, ranging from noise violations to the suspected presence of under-age prostitutes, illegal migrants, or TIP victims, to monitor, raid, and inspect brothels (ref A). END NOTE.]

BECKSTEIN CONFIDENT TIP UNDER CONTROL

¶ 19. (U) In a June 7 press conference, Bavarian Interior Minister Guenther Beckstein said the police in Germany, and particularly in Bavaria, were prepared for the World Cup to an extent unprecedented in recent history. As far as TIP was concerned, Beckstein said he expects the number of

forced prostitutes would likely stay well below media estimates. Recent police controls in brothels and red light areas had kept traffickers on the run. Additionally, authorities had widely distributed TIP prevention pamphlets in various Eastern European languages, and established help hotlines that would be available 24/7 during the championship.

¶10. (U) Previous reporting from Munich is available on our SIPRNET website at www.state.sgov.gov/p/eur/munich.

¶11. (U) This message was coordinated with Embassy Berlin and Consulate General Frankfurt.

ROONEY